



It was a muddy old day for Wycombe forward Steve Long on Saturday. Here he slides in just too late to beat Kingstonian goalkeeper John Overton.

WYCOMBE MUST TRAVEL TO BLYTH

LAST season's FA Cup heroes Blyth Spartans will be Wycombe Wanderers' opponents in the second round of the FA Trophy to be played up north on Saturday, February 3, writes **MICHAEL KNOX**.

On Monday night, Blyth overcame Goole Town 2-1 in a first round replay, marred by the send-off of two of the Goole players in the final five minutes, allegedly for throwing punches.

Both Blyth's goals on the night came from Peter Davies as the Northern League side dominated the match. Goole concentrated on defence and had only one shot on target all night — and that went in!

Two interested spectators at the match were Wycombe manager Andy Williams and his assistant Howard Wells, who made the 600 mile round trip to watch their future opponents.

Mr Williams said afterwards: "Blyth are quite a skilful side and not that

physical, I was quite impressed by their front three, while their defence was never under pressure."

So how does Mr Williams rate his side's chances of reaching the last 16 for the first time?

CHARACTER

"It's all down to character and attitude. The main problems are the distance and the fact that we are playing in the North East," he said.

Blues can take comfort from the fact that Blyth have lost more than half the side that so nearly defeated Wrexham in the fifth round of last season's FA Cup, plus manager Brian Slane, who resigned last week for personal reasons.

His successor is the former trainer Jack Marks, who will be remembered for his cheer leading exploits on television last season. When Blyth eventually lost to Wrexham, Mr Marks was seen to be in tears.

"I hope he'll be in tears again after our game," quipped Mr Williams.

Among the players to have

left are two of Blyth's leading marksmen. Alan Shoulder has been signed by Newcastle United while Ian Mutrie has gone to North Shields.

Despite the reshuffle Blyth are still striving for the Northern League championship. At present they are second, but if they beat leaders Bishop Auckland tomorrow (Saturday) they will go top.

KEY PLAYERS

Their key players include last season's leading scorer Terry Johnson and the former Newcastle defender Ron Guthrie, who played in midfield on Monday night, after a reshuffle because of injury.

One Wanderer particularly keen to gain revenge over Blyth is Keith Mead, whose 20 yard own goal gave the northerners a 2-1 victory in the quarter-finals of the last FA Amateur Cup back in 1973-74.

Keith, who was jolted from behind as he attempted that back pass, will not want to be reminded of that fact. But it will make him doubly deter-

mined to succeed at Croft Park this time.

POSTPONED

Heavy snow and freezing conditions led to Tuesday night's Berks and Bucks Senior Cup tie at home to local rivals Maidenhead being postponed. It will now be played this coming Tuesday at 7.30 pm — weather permitting.

Unless there is a quick thaw, there must be a chance of tomorrow's Isthmian League match at home to Barking also having to be postponed.

Blues go into that match with renewed confidence after their excellent victory over the East London side 10 days ago.

Blues only won that match 1-0 but dominated for long periods and finally clinched the winner four minutes from time through Mark Judd.

Judd, a most exciting player, also made both goals in last Saturday's narrow 2-1 victory over Kingstonian, which moved them up to fourth place in the table.

Go by train for £6

WYCOMBE Wanderers Supporters Club have taken the ambitious step of hiring a train from British Rail to take the fans up to Blyth and back for the remarkably cheap price of £6. Members of the Supporters Club, indeed, will have to pay only £5.50.

The train will leave Wycombe early on Saturday

morning — time to be announced later — and arrive in Morpeth. A fleet of coaches will take the fans the final 10 miles to Blyth.

The return journey will be made that evening. The fare, which includes the train and coach journeys is just £6 for members of the public.

Tickets will be on sale this weekend at the following

times at Loakes Park: Saturday 4-6 pm; Sunday 10 am-12 noon; Monday 7-9 pm.

Players and team officials will go up to Blyth by plane, leaving at Heathrow and arriving at Newcastle. However, they will come back with the fans in the train.

BRING A SHOVEL!

DUE to the state of the pitch and the weather, it may be necessary to clear Loakes Park for Saturday's Berger Isthmian League game against Barking. Wycombe Wanderers would be grateful if supporters could turn up with brooms and shovels on Saturday at 10 am to help clear the ground.